

## THE BLESSING OF A SEMINARY FAMILY

*"I will bless the lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth." Ps 34:1*

Middler Michelle Page does not bless God with the fruit of her lips only: her entire life has become a song of praise dedicated to God. A native of Baltimore, Md., Michelle "accepted Christ as personal Lord and Savior" at the age of 9. By the time she came to seminary, Michelle, who is a licensed, Baptist minister, already had 20 years of faithful, multi-faceted, leadership experience in the church, ranging from worship leader to teaching roles with youth, young adult, and women's ministries.



"Having served in church all my life, being a part of a ministry was an expectation," says Michelle, who currently serves at her home church as associate minister, Sunday School teacher, worship leader, workshop presenter, leader of Women's Ministry, and preacher (with regular assignments both in and outside of her church). Despite that, coming to seminary was not a foregone conclusion. "My home church did not have women in any leadership capacity in the church except as Sunday School teachers." Consequently, in spite of Michelle's dynamic track record of service in the church, 13 years ago when she "felt God's leading to the ministry, in particular preaching and teaching," she was reluctant to share her sense of call with those around her.

As was the case at the burning bush with her Old Testament hero, Moses, God's call to Michelle was not met with a resounding "yes." Her previous professional career in non-profit management culminated in departmental human resources at a local university and two years of business graduate school attendance. "I initially ran from attending seminary. I was about two years into my part-time program when I felt God leading me away from business school and to seminary."

While it was difficult for Michelle to acknowledge and embrace her call to seminary, she is grateful that "many seasoned saints saw [her] calling before [she] had the courage to acknowledge it." Michelle sees the same faithfulness God extended to Moses reflected in her own journey from working full-time while attending business school part time; to ultimately leaving a respectable, full-time salary to attend seminary as a full-time student with sights now set on completing the M.Div./M.S.W. dual degree program in 2019.

As Michelle considers future, kingdom-building work focused on pastoral care and counseling, she continues to hold sacred the steadfast grace and love that God has shown through the gift of family, both at home and at PTS. Michelle, who has been married to Pastor Daniel Page for 17 years, makes a priority of spending time with her husband and two, daughters, Kayla, 14 and Kyras, 13. While motherhood allowed her to see undiscovered strength that may have inspired her to apply to seminary, the lasting relationships that she has formed while at seminary continue to be a source of courage and blessing. "Several of my seminary classmates attended my licensing to the Gospel ministry in 2015. The students that I journey with are not just classmates. They are colleagues and friends that are more invested in supporting each other through this journey. We laugh, we study, we pray, and sometimes we cry." It is in these family moments of magnifying the Lord together that "God is still revealing purpose and direction," to Michelle, who looks forward with joy to sharing "the Gospel with no limits or boundaries on [God's] assignment for my life."

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